Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Implementation of)	
the Local Competition Provisions of)	CC Docket No. 96-98
the Telecommunications Act of 1996)	
)	
Deaveraged Rate Zones for)	
Unbundled Network Elements)	

Declaration of Sherry Lichtenberg

- I, Sherry Lichtenberg, depose and state as follows:
- 1. I am Senior Manager, OSS Interfaces and Facilities Product Development, for the Mass Markets Division of MCI WorldCom. My duties include designing, managing and implementing MCI WorldCom's provision of local telecommunications services to residential customers on a mass market basis. Among other things, I am responsible for identifying requirements for the development of operations support systems ("OSS") and facilities testing, including MCI WorldCom's participation in third-party testing throughout the country and state-by-state residential market entry/readiness assessment. I have been a member of the MCI WorldCom local service organization for 2 years. Prior to joining MCI WorldCom, I was employed by AT&T for 15 years. My previous experience includes positions as Strategic Pricing Director for AT&T Government Markets, Product Manager for hospitality products, and Strategic Planning and Support Director for the Government sector. I was a member of the initial development team for AT&T's first digital PBXs (System 75 and System 85) and worked on AT&T's initial post-divestiture ordering system, DOSS.

- 2. In order to enter the residential mass market for local phone service in a given geographic area, MCI WorldCom must have the capacity to serve thousands of new customers, regardless of their location within the region served. This is because mass-market competitive entry on a commercially significant level requires economies of scale and broad-based sales and marketing efforts. Thus, competitive entry into mass markets requires broad access to a network that would enable MCI WorldCom to offer service simultaneously to thousands of customers. Given this need, it is not possible for MCI WorldCom to enter mass markets gradually while it builds out its own local network facilities.
- WorldCom to enter local residential markets by reselling ILEC services. The principal disadvantages of resale are product differentiation and cost. A reseller by definition can offer consumers only the exact same service that is already available from the ILEC itself. Indeed, because the Act as interpreted does not require ILECs to make available for resale services such as voicemail, through resale competitors cannot even offer all of the services already available to consumers directly from ILECs. As a result, resellers cannot differentiate the services they offer. This is a major limitation on resale as a competitive entry strategy. But by far the largest problem with resale is cost. In almost every market, for almost every customer, the wholesale rates set by the states make it unprofitable to compete through resale. At the rates that have been adopted across the country, resale is not a profitable competitive strategy for MCI WorldCom over the long term.
- 4. Thus, the only way that MCI WorldCom can presently enter many residential mass markets for local phone service is by leasing unbundled network elements (UNEs) from an

ILEC's ubiquitous network. MCI WorldCom has worked hard to put together viable residential mass market offerings using UNEs in several markets, including New York, where MCI WorldCom's efforts are furthest along.

- 5. MCI WorldCom's experience in creating residential mass market offerings using UNEs has shown that there are innumerable critical preconditions to successfully entering mass markets in this way. One especially critical hurdle is insupportably high prices for UNEs, which create an absolute barrier to competition that stops residential UNE-based mass market entry before it can even get started. Obviously, neither MCI WorldCom nor any other competing phone company can afford to enter a residential mass market if the cost of inputs for mass market service exceeds the revenue that can be received for selling that service. There are numerous states that currently have UNE prices that are too high to allow MCI WorldCom to enter into mass markets there. For example, UNE rates in two of the largest states, California and Florida, are too high for MCI WorldCom to compete using UNEs (or by any other entry strategy).
- 6. Averaging UNE rates across an entire state has the effect of making UNE rates much higher in densely populated urban areas than they would be if these rates were deaveraged into a minimum of three density zones. Because densely populated urban areas create economies of scale and require much shorter loops connecting switches to customer premises, it costs much less to provide UNEs in urban areas than in sparsely populated rural areas. To take one example, in Illinois the deaveraged loop rate for the most densely populated area (Zone 1) is \$2.59, while for the least densely populated areas (Zone 3) it is \$11.40, or 4.4 times the Zone 1 rate. And the average rate across all three zones in Illinois is \$9.65, or 3.7 times the Zone 1 rate. Thus, if UNE prices were averaged rather than deaveraged in Illinois, the price of a local loop in the heart of

Chicago would be 3.7 times what it is now. Non-cost based rates in urban areas also block entry into adjacent non-urban areas, due to the economies of scale necessary for mass market entry.

- 7. For states that have so far refused to deaverage UNE prices, such as California and Florida, it is by definition presently impossible to calculate exactly how much lower the UNE prices for urban areas will be when the utility commissions in those states finally do set deaveraged rates. However, experience with deaveraging indicates that prices in urban areas will be much lower than they are now. As a result, it is very likely that in some areas where averaged UNE prices are currently too high to allow mass market entry by MCI WorldCom, profitable UNE-based mass market entry will become economically feasible once deaveraging occurs.
- 8. In those areas where averaged UNE prices presently preclude UNE-based residential mass market entry, further delay in deaveraging will have long-term consequences as well. Given the huge investments and substantial human resources needed for mass market entry in a geographic area, MCI WorldCom estimates that actual entry into mass markets is likely to come only 12 to 18 months, or even more, after states regulators set deaveraged rates that make UNE-based entry economically viable.
- 9. In addition, further delay in setting long-term UNE rates has an immediate negative impact on MCI WorldCom's ability to develop and implement its local business strategy. Local service entry by its nature requires long-term planning. Without knowing now whether and when local loops will be available at cost-based rates, it is extremely difficult to plan intelligently for the future. The kinds of local service MCI WorldCom decides to offer customers in 2000 and 2001 -- and the kinds of equipment we will use to provide that service -- depend on investment and market entry choices MCI WorldCom must make now. Thus, even apart from the level of

UNE prices set by regulators, constant regulatory changes which lead to constantly changing prices create their own serious planning problems. MCI WorldCom expected and planned for some level of regulatory uncertainty as the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was put through its paces. But the continued uncertainty ensured by not enforcing the FCC's deaveraging rule for the foreseeable future makes it very difficult to make sensible investment decisions, with long-term adverse repercussions.

- 10. Competitive realities dictate that MCI WorldCom make every effort to compete in local markets. When MCI WorldCom is prevented from entering a residential mass market, its losses are not limited to the charges residential customers pay for basic local service. Providing basic local service is also the prerequisite for MCI WorldCom to be able to market advanced services and features (such as voicemail, call waiting, caller ID, etc.) to residential customers and to collect access charges from a residential customer's long-distance provider. Entering the residential mass market for local service is also a prerequisite for MCI WorldCom to market "one-stop shopping" packages that combine local and long-distance service in a single offering, thereby leveraging MCI WorldCom's long-distance services.
- 11. MCI WorldCom has an additional direct and immediate financial interest in competitive entry into local mass markets. By providing UNE-based local service, MCI WorldCom will not incur the exorbitant access charges imposed upon it by the current monopoly providers of local service. Furthermore, even if MCI WorldCom does not provide local service to all of its own long-distance customers, effective competition in local markets (by MCI WorldCom and other new entrants) will force the ILECs to lower the access charges paid by long-distance carriers. The ability to reduce these access charges doubly benefits MCI WorldCom, because

current exorbitant access charges both greatly increase MCI WorldCom's own cost of doing business as a long-distance provider, and give the monopoly ILECs war chests with which to compete against MCI WorldCom. Regulations that delay competitive entry into local markets also delay the onset of these benefits.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: June _____ 1999

Sherry Lichtenberg

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, William M. Hohengarten, hereby certify that I have this 10th day of June 1999 caused a true copy of MCI WORLDCOM, Inc. and AT&T Corp.'s Motion for a Stay Pending Judicial Review to be served on the parties listed below by First Class Mail, postage prepaid:

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